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Box 17754

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington D C 20520

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY J.L. MITCHELL DATE 6/18

2025-2026-2027-2028

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REMARKS

IN PART

SYNOPSIS

8-1-8

CONFIDENTIAL
(entire text)

TO: The Secretary

THROUGH: P - Mr. Newsom

FROM: S/MS Marshall D. Shulman

SUBJECT: Declassification of David Newsom's Testimony
on the US-Soviet Understandings

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CONFIDENTIAL
GDS 9/6/85

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Attachment:

Under Secretary Newsom's September 5 Statement
before the SFRC

CONFIDENTIAL



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

7915883

Washington, D.C. 20520

September 5, 1979

SECRET

Copies to:

CODE I

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TMC

TMD

RF

(DTM)

MEMORANDUM FOR: L - Mr. Hansell

INFO:


S	- Mr. Raphel	H	- Mr. Atwood
D	- Mr. Trattner	S/S-S	- Mr. Hughes
P	- Mr. Suddarth	S/S	- Mr. Bremer
S/MS	- Dr. Shulman		
S/P	- Mr. Lake		
ARA	- Mr. Vaky		
EUR	- Mr. Vest		
INR	- Mr. Bowdler		

SUBJECT: September 5 Statement by Under Secretary Newsom before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Under Secretary Newsom, as part of the follow-up to his testimony before the SFRC today, has asked that you undertake an urgent review of the statement he made (copy attached) with a view to declassifying it at the request of the Committee. If the statement in its entirety cannot be declassified, please indicate what deletions would have to be made to declassify it.

Please prepare an action memorandum, cleared with the appropriate bureaus, to Under Secretary Newsom with your recommendations by COB Friday, September 7.

The S/S-S action officer is Michael Konner, ext 28062.


Peter Tarnoff
Executive Secretary

Attachment:

Statement by Under Secretary Newsom.

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Statement of David D. Newsom
Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs
before
The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations

September 5, 1979

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I welcome the opportunity to meet with you today to discuss the understanding we have with the Soviet Union about Soviet military presence in Cuba.

As you know there have been three main episodes in which the US and USSR have had discussions about Soviet military activities in Cuba: The 1962 missile crisis; the 1970 discussions about naval activities; and the 1978 exchanges concerning MIG-23 aircraft.

The United States and the Soviet Union both recognize that a broad understanding exists on Soviet military activities in Cuba. This understanding is reflected in Kennedy-Khrushchev correspondence of late October and November 1962, and in the 1970 and 1978 communications between the two governments concerning Cuba. The understanding was never embodied in formal documents.

1962:

President Kennedy's address to the nation on October 22 referred to "offensive missile sites" intended to provide "a nuclear strike capability against the

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Western Hemisphere" and "jet bombers, capable of carrying nuclear weapons." It further stated that the presence of these "large, long-range, and clearly offensive weapons of sudden mass destruction" constitute a threat to the peace and security of the Americas.

The Kennedy Proclamation of October 23 declared the following to be prohibited material:

"Surface-to-surface missiles; bomber aircraft; bombs, air-to-surface rockets and guided missiles; warheads for any of the above weapons; mechanical or electronic equipment to support or operate the above items; ..."

President Kennedy's letter of October 27 asked the Soviets to cease work on all offensive missile bases and to render inoperable "all weapons systems in Cuba capable of offensive use." The President further proposed that the Soviets agree to remove these weapons systems and "undertake, with suitable safeguards, to halt the further introduction of such weapons systems into Cuba."

Khrushchev's reply of October 28 states that the Soviet Government had "given a new order to dismantle the arms which you described as offensive" and to return them to the Soviet Union.

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During the next three weeks, there were extensive exchanges about the weapons deemed offensive by the United States and about whether the IL-28 bombers had to be removed, which Khrushchev eventually agreed to do. President Kennedy announced that agreement and the lifting of the quarantine on November 20, 1962. The President's statement recapitulates the understanding as follows:

"Chairman Khrushchev ... agreed to remove from Cuba all weapons systems capable of offensive use, to halt the further introduction of such weapons into Cuba ..."
"In addition, the Soviet Government has stated that all nuclear weapons have been withdrawn from Cuba and no offensive weapons will be reintroduced."

1970:

In September, 1970, the United States became concerned over construction of a naval support facility at Cienfuegos, which appeared to be a support facility for nuclear submarines. Dr. Kissinger stated on September 25 that, "we would view the establishment of a strategic base in the Caribbean with the utmost seriousness."

A Soviet Note of October 6, 1970 reaffirmed that the Soviet Government continued to proceed from the understanding reached on this question in 1962; the Soviets denied doing anything in Cuba that would contradict that understanding.

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To eliminate ambiguity about the meaning of a "submarine base," the United States gave the Soviets a Note on October 9, stating our understanding that the USSR would not establish, utilize, or permit the establishment of any facility in Cuba that could be employed to support or repair Soviet naval ships capable of carrying offensive weapons; i.e., submarines or surface ships armed with nuclear-capable, surface-to-surface missiles. On October 23, Dobrynin told Dr. Kissinger of the Soviet position that the Soviets did not have a military naval facility in Cuba, and would abide strictly by the understandings in 1962. The Soviets also said that they were making the exchanges from August onward part of the understanding of 1962. [

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1978:

Late last year the United States confronted the issue of whether MIG-23 aircraft provided to Cuba by the Soviet Union were capable of carrying nuclear weapons and therefore conflicted with the 1962 understanding. Through surveillance and diplomatic exchanges we ascertained that the MIG-23s in Cuba were not configured so as to have a nuclear weapon capability.

Military Personnel:

The 1962 US-USSR exchanges dealt with Soviet military personnel primarily in the context of specialists and technicians who were involved with operation and servicing of the objectionable offensive weapons systems and were to be withdrawn from the weapons systems

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Although the exchanges of communications at the height of the 1962 crisis did not include references to other personnel, on February 7, 1963 President Kennedy publicly said the continued presence of Soviet military personnel in Cuba was of concern to the United States; he spoke of statements by Khrushchev that they would be removed in due course and said that the United States was "going to try to find out" what such statements meant.

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The focus of the discussions in 1962 was initially on offensive missile systems and subsequently on personnel related to such systems and on nuclear-capable bombers and accompanying personnel which were also in Cuba.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ACTION MEMORANDUM

ORIGINAL TO EUR
HITLER. NEWSON'S

TESTIMONY: CONFIDENTIAL
(entire text)

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7 SEP 1978

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EXCISE

COPIES TO:

- D
- P
- S/S-S
- TED
- EUR
- L
- S/P
- S/MS
- RP (15)

TO: The Secretary

THROUGH: P - Mr. Newsom
S/MS - Dr. Shulman

FROM: EUR - George Vest

SUBJECT: Release of Newsom Testimony on US/USSR Understandings on Cuba

Issue for Decision

Whether to declassify the attached sanitized version of Mr. Newsom's testimony to the Foreign Relations Committee on the US/Soviet understandings regarding Cuba.

Essential Elements



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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY J.L. SMITH DATE NOV 3 1984
CLASSIFICATION EXTENDED
REASON(S) DATE OADR
TO AGENT J. BURKE REASON(S) CDC MEMO
ENFORCE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐ 5/13/83
UNCLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASABLE ☐
RELEASE DENIED IN P. 9K-7
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS B-1, B-5

CONFIDENTIAL
GDS 9/7/85

DECLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

-2-

We also doubt that release of this testimony alone will satisfy the Foreign Relations Committee. Rather, we may then be faced with further requests to declassify detailed accounts of the conversations which make up the understandings.

If you decide that the testimony should be declassified, we believe the attached sanitized version would be an appropriate version.

Recommendation

That you authorize us to inform the Committee that [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] we do not feel it would be useful to release the Newsom testimony.

11 SEP 1979

Approve ☒ Disapprove ☐

Alternatively, that you authorize the release of the attached version of Mr. Newsom's testimony.

Approve ☐ Disapprove ☒ 11 SEP 1979

Attachment:

Sanitized version of Mr. Newsom's testimony.

Drafted by:
EUR:RLBarry/ur
x21126:9/1/79

cc: L:HHansell

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~~SECRET~~

Statement of David D. Newson
Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs
before
The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations

September 5, 1979

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I welcome the opportunity to meet with you today to discuss the understanding we have with the Soviet Union about Soviet military presence in Cuba.

As you know there have been three main episodes in which the U.S. and USSR have had discussions about Soviet military activities in Cuba: The 1962 missile crisis; the 1970 discussions about naval activities; and the 1978 exchanges concerning MIG-23 aircraft.

The United States and the Soviet Union both recognize that a broad understanding exists on Soviet military activities in Cuba. This understanding is reflected in Kennedy-Khrushchev correspondence of late October and November 1962, and in the 1970 and 1978 communications between the two governments concerning Cuba. The understanding was never embodied in formal documents.

1962:

President Kennedy's address to the nation on October 22 referred to "offensive missile sites"

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intended to provide "a nuclear strike capability against the Western Hemisphere" and "jet bombers, capable of carrying nuclear weapons." It further stated that the presence of these "large, long-range, and clearly offensive weapons of sudden mass destruction" constitute a threat to the peace and security of the Americas.

The Kennedy Proclamation of October 23 declared the following to be prohibited material:

"Surface-to-surface missiles; bomber aircraft; bombs, air-to-surface rockets and guided missiles; warheads for any of the above weapons; mechanical or electronic equipment to support or operate the above items;..."

President Kennedy's letter of October 27 asked the Soviets to cease work on all offensive missile bases and to render inoperable "all weapons systems in Cuba capable of offensive use." The President further proposed that the Soviets agree to remove these weapons systems and "undertake, with suitable safeguards, to halt the further introduction of such weapons systems into Cuba." Khrushchev's reply of October 28 states that the Soviet Government had "given a new order to dismantle the arms which you described as offensive" and to return them to the Soviet Union.

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During the next three weeks, there were extensive exchanges about the weapons deemed offensive by the United States and about whether the IL-28 bombers had to be removed, which Khrushchev eventually agreed to do. President Kennedy announced that agreement and the lifting of the quarantine on November 20, 1962. The President's statement recapitulates the understanding as follows:

"Chairman Khrushchev ... agreed to remove from Cuba all weapons systems capable of offensive use, to halt the further introduction of such weapons into Cuba ..."

"In addition, the Soviet Government has stated that all nuclear weapons have been withdrawn from Cuba and no offensive weapons will be reintroduced."

1970:

In [September~~7~~] 1970, the United States became concerned over construction of a naval support facility at Cienfuegos, which appeared to be a support facility for nuclear submarines. [Dr. Kissinger]* stated on September 25 that, "we would view the establishment of a strategic base in the Caribbean with the utmost seriousness."

[A-Soviet-Note-of] In October [6] 1970, the Soviet Union reaffirmed that the Soviet Government continued

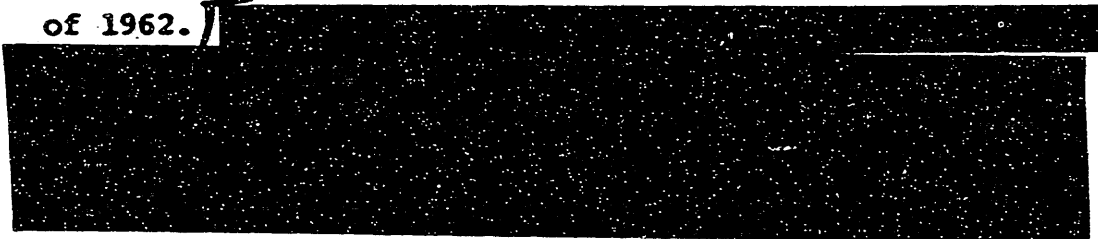
*The quoted statement was given for the record on background. Should we consult with Dr. Kissinger before publicly identifying him as the spokesman?

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to proceed from the understanding reached on this question in 1962; the Soviets denied doing anything in Cuba that would contradict that understanding.

To eliminate ambiguity about the meaning of a "submarine base," the United States [~~gave~~] expressed to the Soviets [~~a Note on October 9, stating~~] our understanding that the USSR [~~would~~] could not [~~establish, utilize, or permit the establishment of any~~] have a facility in Cuba [~~that could be employed to~~] for support or repair of Soviet naval ships capable of carrying offensive weapons. [~~i.e., submarines or surface ships armed with nuclear capable, surface-to-surface missiles~~]. [~~On October 23, Dobrynin told Dr. Kissinger of the Soviet position that~~] The Soviets assured us that they did not have a military naval facility in Cuba, [~~and~~] that they would abide strictly by the understandings in 1962 and that they considered [~~The Soviets also said that they were making~~] the 1970 exchanges on [~~from August on-ward~~] Soviet naval activities part of the understanding of 1962.]



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1978:

Late last year the United States confronted the issue of whether MIG-23 aircraft provided to Cuba by the Soviet Union were capable of carrying nuclear weapons and therefore conflicted with the 1962 understanding. Through surveillance and diplomatic exchanges we ascertained that the MIG-23s in Cuba were not configured so as to have a nuclear weapon capability. 

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Military Personnel

The 1962 US-USSR exchanges dealt with Soviet military personnel primarily in the context of specialists and technicians who were involved with operation and servicing of the objectionable offensive weapons systems and were to be withdrawn with the weapons systems.

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Although the exchanges of communications at the height of the 1962 crisis did not include references to other personnel, on February 7, 1963 President Kennedy publicly said the continued presence of Soviet military personnel in Cuba was of concern to the United States; he spoke of statements by Khrushchev that they would be removed in due course and said that the United States was "going to try to find out" what such statements meant.

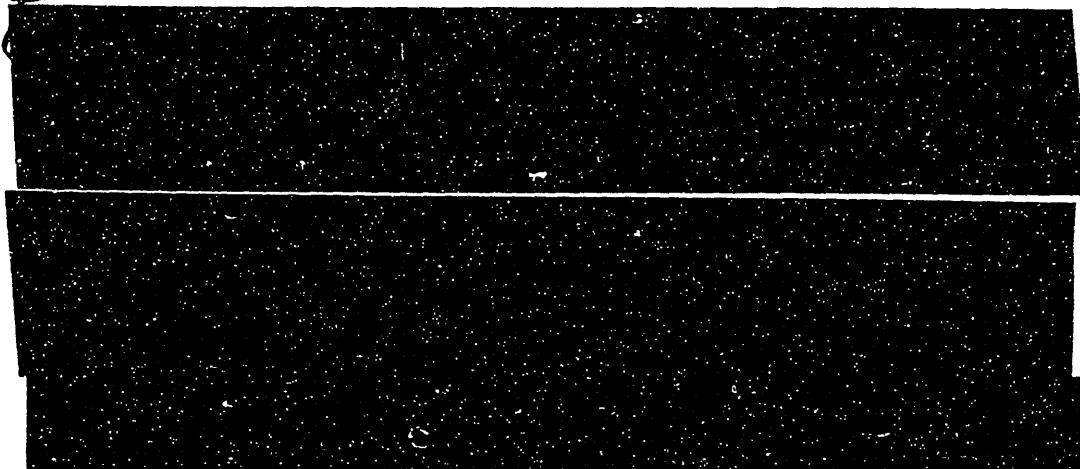
[REDACTED]

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The focus of the discussions in 1962 was initially on offensive missile systems and subsequently on personnel related to such systems and on nuclear-capable bombers and accompanying personnel which were also in Cuba.

While we have made clear our concerns about Soviet troops in Cuba from 1962 to the present, the presence of such troops unrelated to offensive systems is not covered by the past undertakings.

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